

From: David L. Van Brunt
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 11/19/01 10:49am
Subject: Abuse of Monopoly has reached the consumer level

A few years ago, I purchases a database product from Microsoft. On the box and in its advertising, it explicitly stated "designed for the Power Macintosh". I spent over \$400 on this piece of software. It was so badly bug-ridden as to be unusable for my purposes, so I called the Microsoft Help Line.

I was transferred many times until I reached a person who was experienced with that product. They told me that what I wanted to do was not operational in the software version that I owned (though the box clearly said it should be), that they knew it was a bug in the code, and that the software I bought was not really designed for Power Macintosh but was instead a hastily made port of their Windows product. Further, they said that the bug was going to be fixed in the Windows product (free updates for users of their OS), but that there would be no further updates of the Mac product (since it was not really "designed for Power Macintosh" as they claimed). They also said no, I could **not** have a refund because the box was opened. When I complained that I deserved a refund because they had both misrepresented themselves and sold me a defective product, the Microsoft representative **actually laughed at me**, and said, "Yeah, well.... Who you gonna go to? The competition??"

This sort of arrogant customer abuse comes with the confidence of impunity. They had already violated earlier "remedies" for their earlier abuses, and did not hesitate to trample the consumer who didn't comply with their will (their OS or no OS).

Good for consumers? Ha! the only remedy good for consumers would be to break up this company to allow competition among the real innovators in the marketplace.

Warm regards,

David L. Van Brunt, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
University of TN Health Sciences Center
<<http://www.utmem.edu/prevmed/>>